

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Governmental Oversight and Accountability

BILL: SPB 7022

INTRODUCER: For consideration by the Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee

SUBJECT: State-administered Retirement Systems

DATE: March 3, 2017

REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Ferrin	Ferrin		Pre-meeting

I. Summary:

SPB 7022 establishes the contribution rates paid by employers participating in the Florida Retirement System (FRS) beginning July 1, 2017. These rates are intended to fund the full normal cost and the amortization of the unfunded actuarial liability of the FRS. With these modifications to employer contribution rates, the FRS Trust Fund will receive roughly \$149.5 million more in revenue on an annual basis beginning July 1, 2017. The public employers that will incur these additional costs are state agencies, state universities and colleges, school districts, counties, and certain municipalities and other governmental entities.

II. Present Situation:

The Florida Retirement System

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) was established in 1970 when the Legislature consolidated the Teachers' Retirement System, the State and County Officers and Employees' Retirement System, and the Highway Patrol Pension Fund. In 1972, the Judicial Retirement System was consolidated into the FRS, and in 2007, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Supplemental Retirement Program was consolidated under the Regular Class of the FRS as a closed group.¹ The FRS is a contributory system, with most members contributing three percent of their salaries.²

The FRS is a multi-employer, contributory plan, governed by the Florida Retirement System Act in Chapter 121, F.S. As of June 30, 2016, the FRS had 630,350 active members, 394,907 annuitants, 16,248 disabled retirees, and 29,602 active participants of the Deferred Retirement

¹ Florida Retirement System Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016, at p. 29. Available online at: https://www.rol.frs.state.fl.us/forms/2015-16_CAFR.pdf.

² Prior to 1975, members of the FRS were required to make employee contributions of either 4 percent for Regular Class employees or 6 percent for Special Risk Class members. Employees were again required to contribute to the system after July 1, 2011. Members in the Deferred Retirement Option Program do not contribute to the system.

Option Program (DROP).³ As of June 30, 2016, the FRS consisted of 1,029 total employers; it is the primary retirement plan for employees of state and county government agencies, district school boards, Florida College institutions, and state universities, and also includes the 193 cities and 270 special districts that have elected to join the system.⁴

The membership of the FRS is divided into five membership classes:

- The Regular Class⁵ consists of 545,680 active members, plus 3,709 in renewed membership;
- The Special Risk Class⁶ includes 70,695 active members;
- The Special Risk Administrative Support Class⁷ has 76 active members;
- The Elected Officers' Class⁸ has 2,026 active members, plus 115 in renewed membership; and
- The Senior Management Service Class⁹ has 7,876 members, plus 143 in renewed membership.¹⁰

Each class is funded separately based upon the costs attributable to the members of that class.

Members of the FRS have two primary plan options available for participation:

- The defined contribution plan, also known as the Investment Plan; and
- The defined benefit plan, also known as the Pension Plan.

Investment Plan

In 2000, the Legislature created the Public Employee Optional Retirement Program (investment plan), a defined contribution plan offered to eligible employees as an alternative to the FRS Pension Plan.

Benefits under the investment plan accrue in individual member accounts funded by both employee and employer contributions and earnings. Benefits are provided through employee-directed investments offered by approved investment providers.

A member vests immediately in all employee contributions paid to the investment plan.¹¹ With respect to the employer contributions, a member vests after completing one work year of

³ Florida Retirement System Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016, at 120.

⁴ *Id.*, at 154.

⁵ The Regular Class is for all members who are not assigned to another class. Section 121.021(12), F.S.

⁶ The Special Risk Class is for members employed as law enforcement officers, firefighters, correctional officers, probation officers, paramedics and emergency technicians, among others. Section 121.0515, F.S.

⁷ The Special Risk Administrative Support Class is for a special risk member who moved or was reassigned to a nonspecial risk law enforcement, firefighting, correctional, or emergency medical care administrative support position with the same agency, or who is subsequently employed in such a position under the Florida Retirement System. Section 121.0515(8), F.S.

⁸ The Elected Officers' Class is for elected state and county officers, and for those elected municipal or special district officers whose governing body has chosen Elected Officers' Class participation for its elected officers. Section 121.052, F.S.

⁹ The Senior Management Service Class is for members who fill senior management level positions assigned by law to the Senior Management Service Class or authorized by law as eligible for Senior Management Service designation. Section 121.055, F.S.

¹⁰ All figures from Florida Retirement System Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016, at 123.

¹¹ Section 121.4501(6)(a), F.S.

employment with an FRS employer.¹² Vested benefits are payable upon termination or death as a lump-sum distribution, direct rollover distribution, or periodic distribution.¹³ The investment plan also provides disability coverage for both in-line-of-duty and regular disability retirement benefits.¹⁴ An FRS member who qualifies for disability while enrolled in the investment plan must apply for benefits as if the employee were a member of the pension plan. If approved for retirement disability benefits, the member is transferred to the pension plan.¹⁵

The State Board of Administration (SBA) is primarily responsible for administering the investment plan.¹⁶ The SBA is comprised of the Governor as chair, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Attorney General.¹⁷

Pension Plan

The pension plan is administered by the secretary of the Department of Management Services through the Division of Retirement.¹⁸ Investment management is handled by the State Board of Administration.

Any member initially enrolled in the pension plan before July 1, 2011, vests in the pension plan after completing six years of service with an FRS employer.¹⁹ For members enrolled on or after July 1, 2011, the member vests in the pension plan after eight years of creditable service.²⁰ Benefits payable under the pension plan are calculated based on the member's years of creditable service multiplied by the service accrual rate multiplied by the member's average final compensation.²¹ For most members of the pension plan, normal retirement (when first eligible for unreduced benefits) occurs at the earliest attainment of 30 years of service or age 62.²² For public safety employees in the Special Risk and Special Risk Administrative Support Classes, normal retirement is the earliest of 25 years of service or age 55.²³ Members initially enrolled in the pension plan on or after July 1, 2011, have longer service requirements. For members initially enrolled after that date, the member must complete 33 years of service or attain age 65, and members in the Special Risk classes must complete 30 years of service or attain age 60.²⁴

¹² If a member terminates employment before vesting in the investment plan, the nonvested money is transferred from the member's account to the SBA for deposit and investment by the SBA in its suspense account for up to five years. If the member is not reemployed as an eligible employee within five years, then any nonvested accumulations transferred from a member's account to the SBA's suspense account are forfeited. Section 121.4501(6)(b)-(d), F.S.

¹³ Section 121.591, F.S.

¹⁴ See s. 121.4501(16), F.S.

¹⁵ Pension plan disability retirement benefits, which apply for investment plan members who qualify for disability, compensate an in-line-of-duty disabled member up to 65 percent of the average monthly compensation as of the disability retirement date for special risk class members. Other members may receive up to 42 percent of the member's average monthly compensation for disability retirement benefits. If the disability occurs other than in the line of duty, the monthly benefit may not be less than 25 percent of the average monthly compensation as of the disability retirement date. Section 121.091(4)(f), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 121.4501(8), F.S.

¹⁷ FLA CONST. art. IV, s. 4.

¹⁸ Section 121.025, F.S.

¹⁹ Section 121.021(45)(a), F.S.

²⁰ Section 121.021(45)(b), F.S.

²¹ Section 121.091, F.S.

²² Section 121.021(29)(a)1., F.S.

²³ Section 121.021(29)(b)1., F.S.

²⁴ Sections 121.021(29)(a)2. and (b)2., F.S.

Optional Retirement Programs

Eligible employees may choose to participate in one of three retirement programs instead of participating in the FRS:

- Members of the Senior Management Service Class may elect to enroll in the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program;²⁵
- Members in specified positions in the State University System may elect to enroll in the State University System Optional Retirement Program;²⁶ and
- Members in specified positions at a Florida College institution may elect to enroll in the State Community College System Optional Retirement Program.²⁷

Contribution Rates

FRS employers are responsible for contributing a specified percentage of the member’s monthly compensation to the Division of Retirement to be distributed into the FRS Contributions Clearing Trust Fund. The employer contribution rate is a blended contribution rate set by statute, which is the same percentage regardless of whether the member participates in the pension plan or the investment plan.²⁸ The rate is determined annually based on an actuarial study by the Department of Management Services that calculates the necessary level of funding to support all of the benefit obligations under both FRS retirement plans.

In the annual actuarial valuation of the Florida Retirement System based on July 1, 2016, plan assets and liabilities, Milliman, Inc., the state actuary, determined the following key data relating to the FRS pension plan.²⁹

	Valuation Results (in \$ billions)			
	July 1, 2013	July 1, 2014	July 1, 2015	July 1, 2016
Actuarial Liability	\$153.3	\$160.1	\$165.5	\$170.4
Actuarial Value of Assets	\$131.7	\$138.6	\$143.2	\$145.5
Unfunded Actuarial Liability	\$ 21.6	\$21.5	\$22.3	\$24.9
Funded Percentage (Actuarial Value of Assets/Actuarial Liability)	85.9%	86.6%	86.5%	85.4%

²⁵ The Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program (SMSOAP) was established in 1986 for members of the Senior Management Service Class. Employees in eligible positions may irrevocably elect to participate in the SMSOAP rather than the FRS. Section 121.055(6), F.S.

²⁶ Eligible participants of the State University System Optional Retirement Program (SUSORP) are automatically enrolled in the SUSORP. However, the member must execute a contract with a SUSORP provider within the first 90 days of employment or the employee will default into the pension plan. If the employee decides to remain in the SUSORP, the decision is irrevocable and the member must remain in the SUSORP as long as the member remains in a SUSORP-eligible position. Section 121.35, F.S.

²⁷ If the member is eligible for participation in a State Community College System Optional Retirement Program, the member must elect to participate in the program within 90 days of employment. Unlike the other optional programs, an employee who elects to participate in this optional retirement program has one opportunity to transfer to the FRS. Section 1012.875, F.S.

²⁸ Section 121.70(1), F.S.

²⁹ Florida Retirement System Comprehensive Annual Financial Report Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2016, at 101.

The state actuary determines a rate associated with the normal cost of the pension plan (funding the prospective benefits) and a rate necessary to amortize the unfunded actuarial liabilities (UAL) over a thirty year period. The following are the current employer contribution rates³⁰ for each class and the blended rates recommended by the state actuary beginning in July 2017:³¹

Membership Class	Current Rates Effective July 1, 2016		Recommended Rates to be effective July 1, 2017	
	Normal Cost	UAL Rate	Normal Cost	UAL Rate
Regular Class	2.97%	2.83%	2.89%	3.30%
Special Risk Class	11.80%	9.05%	11.81%	9.57%
Special Risk Administrative Support Class	3.87%	22.47%	3.81%	29.08%
Elected Officer’s Class				
• Legislators, Governor, Lt. Governor, Cabinet Officers, State Attorneys, Public Defenders	6.63%	33.75%	6.41%	42.69%
• Justices and Judges	11.68%	23.30%	11.66%	26.25%
• County Officers	8.55%	32.20%	8.48%	35.24%
Senior Management Service Class	4.38%	15.67%	4.28%	16.70%
Deferred Retirement Option Program	4.23%	7.10%	4.17%	7.43%

For all membership classes, except the DROP and certain members with renewed membership, employees contribute three percent of their compensation towards retirement.³²

After employer and employee contributions are placed into the FRS Contributions Clearing Trust Fund, the allocations under the investment plan are transferred to third-party administrators to be placed in the employee’s individual investment accounts, whereas contributions under the pension plan are transferred into the FRS Trust Fund.³³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill modifies the employer-paid contributions for FRS retirement benefits.

Section 1 amends s. 121.71, F.S., to set the employer-paid contributions to the Florida Retirement System Trust Fund for each membership class of the FRS.

Section 2 provides findings that the bill fulfills an important state interest.

³⁰ Section 121.71(4) and (5), F.S.

³¹ Letter to Ms. Elizabeth Stevens, *Re: Blended Proposed Statutory Rates for the 2017-2018 Plan Year Reflecting a Uniform UAL Rate for All Membership Classes and DROP*, dated December 2, 2016 (on file with the Senate Committee on Governmental Accountability and Oversight).

³² Section 121.71(3), F.S.

³³ See ss. 121.4503 and 121.72(1), F.S.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2017.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

Article VII, s. 18(a) of the Florida Constitution provides that: “No county or municipality shall be bound by any general law requiring such county or municipality to spend funds...unless the legislature has determined that such law fulfills an important state interest and unless: ...the expenditure is required to comply with a law that applies to all persons similarly situated...”

This bill includes legislative findings that the bill fulfills important state interests, and the bill applies to all persons similarly situated (those employers participating in the Florida Retirement System), including state agencies, school boards, community colleges, counties, and municipalities.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Florida Retirement System

The aggregate employer contributions anticipated to be paid into the Florida Retirement System Trust Fund in Fiscal Year 2017-2018 will increase by approximately \$149.5 million when compared to the employer contributions paid in Fiscal Year 2016-2017. The impacts by employer group for Fiscal Year 2017-2018 are noted below.

Employer Group	Additional Contributions
State Agencies	\$25.2 m
Universities	\$18.3 m
Colleges	\$4.9 m
School Boards	\$54.1 m
Counties	\$39.3 m
Other	\$7.7 m
Total	\$149.5 m

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 121.71 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.